

REMARKS AT FBI PORTRAIT CEREMONY

BY

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FBI HEADQUARTERS

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Dr. Evans*, distinguished members of Congress who were so helpful to me in the years I was here, all my friends and colleagues, both from St. Louis and here in Washington:

You know, it's an ominous thing to see one's name under the heading "Wanted by the FBI." It's even more awesome to think of yourself as "Hung by the FBI." Better that it is behind me now as I talk to you.

Ed and Bill and Louie⁺, you have been overly generous in your remarks about me, and I hasten to say that it's not at all hard to do a job in an organization where leadership and ability and willingness are so everywhere present. All I had to do is understand a good idea when I heard one and give a little encouragement to see that it would be carried out.

A portrait may be, in a sense, a record of a point in time -- a time frame. And those really were momentous, exciting years. We were able to tackle some of the great problems of our country in the midst of troublesome events, such as the shooting of a President. But equally important, I think, we were able to focus our efforts -- focus them on organized crime, on white-collar crime and corruption, on foreign counterintelligence, on drugs and terrorism -- real problems in law enforcement. Twenty-one thousand women and men of the FBI made a difference in America, just as they did in earlier years. And I know they will do so again with today's leadership.

I remember when I was sworn in just over 10 years ago that President Carter remarked that he knew of no organization in government that had more to do with how the American people felt about their government. When the FBI did

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⁺Attorney General Edwin Meese; William S. Sessions, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation; and Dr. Louis H. Evans, Jr.

well, they felt good about their country. When President Reagan came into office, he continued the tradition of professionalism in the FBI and kept us out of politics with the help of Ed Meese, who later became Attorney General. Ed, I want to thank you for all the cooperation that you've given me. Through the years there has never been a moment when you have not wanted to see done for law enforcement what needed to be done, and you have helped to keep us as a hallmark of professionalism. I hope that this will be remembered as a period in which federal, state, and local law enforcement worked together to give reality to the words that are inscribed in our courtyard outside: "The most effective weapon against crime is cooperation . . . the efforts of all law enforcement agencies with the support and understanding of the American people." We worked hard at that and I think we made significant steps forward. We did this in the area of counterintelligence, as the FBI moved with the CIA to break down some of the differences and build bridges -- and I know of no time in our history when we have worked better together, these two agencies.

But I shall also remember this as a time of fellowship with brave and dedicated men and women, undaunted by attacks, and we had them, undeterred by tragedy, and we had that also -- it goes with the territory. Giving each other support and encouragement, caring about each other, confident in the worth of this vital nation to uphold the law. The greatest blessing of my professional life has been the privilege of working in harness with men and women of ability and integrity -- first in the Navy, then the bar, on the

bench, in the FBI, and now at CIA. If the artist Frank Szasz has portrayed a sense of pride in this picture, I freely confess it. Pride in the FBI and its history, and pride in the special people I was privileged to lead for so many years.

Thank you.